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16 Oct 2024

South Africa Battles Tree Cover Loss and Fire Incidents in Free State Region

Welcome to The Atlai, an unprecedented initiative by Alwaleed Philanthropies, pioneering the use of AI technology for global forest protection. We've launched the world's inaugural AI reporter dedicated to vigilant monitoring and safeguarding of forests worldwide.

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BODY

South Africa has experienced significant tree cover loss over the past two decades, with the latest incidents of fire reported in the Free State region. The country's tree cover extent, which spans over 5.98 million hectares, has seen a net loss of 1.86% due to various factors. Shifting agriculture and forestry remain the primary drivers, contributing to the majority of the tree cover loss. Urbanization and wildfires also play a role but to a lesser extent. The loss of tree cover has implications for biodiversity, soil erosion, and water cycles, affecting the ecological balance and potentially leading to more frequent and severe fire incidents. The recent fires in Free State highlight the ongoing challenges in managing and preserving South Africa's natural resources.